



# Railroad Workers United

**Unity – Solidarity – Democracy: The Rank & File in Action!**

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September 23rd, 2014

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## **An Open Letter to SMART-TD GO-001 General Chairman Randall Knutson**

Dear Mr. Knutson:

The Steering Committee of Railroad Workers United (RWU) strongly urges that the officials of SMART-TD GO-001 immediately release the vote totals of the recent ratification vote for the Tentative Agreements on BNSF. To withhold this information from the members any longer is a travesty of democracy, and a slap in the face to every railroad worker in North America, especially to those working for the BNSF and particularly to those members of SMART-GO-001 who cast their ballot and have a right to know the outcome of the vote, regardless of which way they may have voted.

In an email to the local chairmen of your GCA it was announced by your office on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014 that the TAs were voted down. Yet, here we are, two weeks later and you have seen fit to withhold the actual vote totals from the membership (and everyone else). Why? Anyone can understand that there might be challenged ballots, spoiled ballots and other reasons why a *final* count cannot be stated immediately. But surely there is a *tentative* count, one that was *definitive* enough that your office was able to state unequivocally that "...we have completed the tabulation of ratification ballots for the tentative Crew Consist Agreement and Wage & Rule Settlement, and neither agreement was ratified." So the preliminary numbers do *exist*. Why can't the membership know what they are?

You go on to state that, "a more complete summary of the vote will be forthcoming in the next several weeks but we felt it was important to provide you and our members with immediate notification that these agreements were not ratified." Thank you. But your words suggest that there was a "less complete summary" made available. However, that is not the case. Other than informing the membership that the TAs were voted down, your office has not provided any kind of information, *summary or otherwise*.

Can you imagine the outcry there would be if in say, a mayoral race, the election commission announced the winning candidate ... but then failed to provide a vote count? We can see no reason why these figures have not been released. Whether they be preliminary or final, the members have a right to know. For your office to withhold them any longer will simply cast further doubt upon the integrity and honesty of SMART-TD GO-001.

Sincerely yours,

**Railroad Workers United**